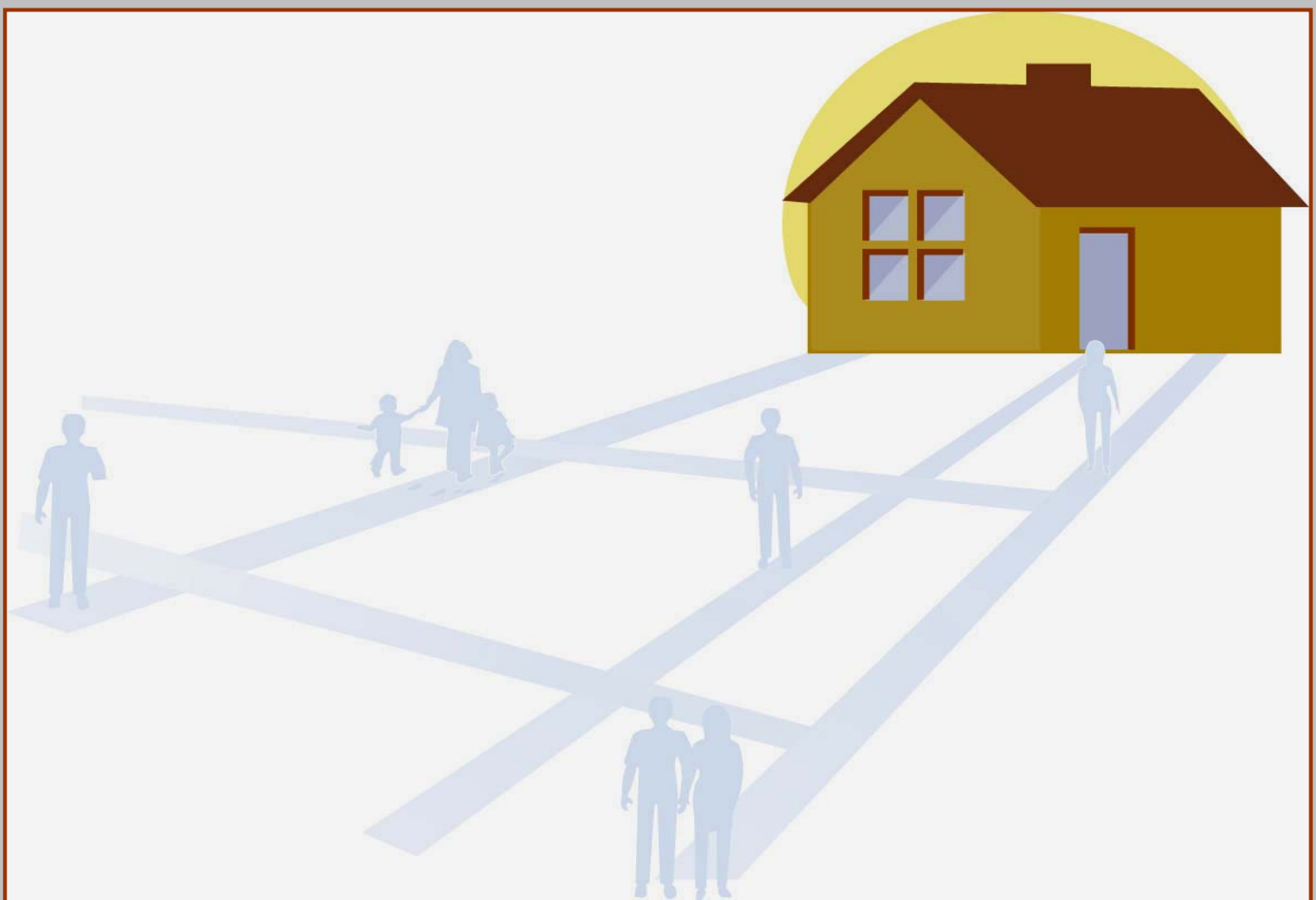


Who is at Risk of Becoming Homeless in Long Beach?



10-YEAR PLAN TO END HOMELESSNESS

City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services

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Introduction

Every day thousands of people are at-risk of becoming homeless in Long Beach because they have to choose between paying their rent or mortgage and other daily living costs such as clothing, food, health care, childcare and transportation, etc due to their limited income.

The following is a summary of the thousands of people at risk of becoming homeless in Long Beach and why.

I. Who is At Risk of Becoming Homeless in Long Beach?

What Is “At risk of becoming homeless”?

At risk of becoming homeless is defined as households at risk of losing their permanent housing because they have limited income and are forced to choose between paying their rent or mortgage and other daily living costs such as clothing, food, health care and transportation.

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 5% of a community’s poor households will experience homelessness annually. 55,744 Long Beach households have a limited income, which is defined as an annual income of less than \$25,000*.

**The California Employment Development Department*

Therefore, 2,787 (5%) Long Beach households are at risk of becoming homeless. People who are at risk of becoming homeless often have to choose between paying their rent or mortgage and other daily living costs such as clothing, food, health care, childcare and transportation.

Fair market rents (FMRs) for rental housing in Long Beach between 2000 – 2005 increased by approximately 50%.

	Monthly Housing Cost		Annual Housing Cost		% of increase
Bedrooms	2000 Rent	2005 Rent	2000	2005	
0	\$505	\$746	\$6,060	\$8,952	48%
1	\$605	\$900	\$7,260	\$10,800	49%
2	\$766	\$1,124	\$9,192	\$13,488	46%
3	\$1,033	\$1,510	\$12,396	\$18,120	46%
4	\$1,233	\$1,816	\$14,796	\$21,792	47%

However, the hourly rate for most occupations in LA County between 2001 and 2005 increased from 5% -25% increases and did not increase at the same rate as housing costs*

Using the HUD definition of “rent burdened” all rental housing is out of reach for these Long Beach heads of household:

Housing Out of Reach In Long Beach				
Worker	Income	30% of	Fair Market rent:	
	Year/month	monthly income		
Fast Food Workers	\$14,800/\$1,233	\$366	Bedrooms	Rent
Garment Workers	\$14,800/\$1,233	\$366		
Cashiers	\$15,200/\$1,266	\$380		
Security Officers	\$17,100/\$1,425	\$428		
Nurses Aides	\$18,800/\$1,566	\$470		
Social Workers	\$24,900/\$2,075	\$623		
Bookkeepers	\$26,700/\$2,225	\$668		
Janitors (Unionized)	\$27,500/\$2,292	\$688		

As salaries and fixed incomes have remained flat, the cost of housing, medical care, gas, food, and childcare have continued to increase. Poor people are much more likely to be renters than homeowners and, as rents increase, their financial situations become more and more precarious.

Households who are “rent burdened” are at risk of becoming homeless because they often have to choose between paying their rent or mortgage and other daily living costs such as child care, clothing, food, health care, and transportation.

II. Who is Most At Risk of Becoming Homeless in Long Beach?

There are sections of the population that are more at risk than others to becoming homeless. The following are examples of those most at risk and why.

1. Persons with Disabilities

Residents can become at risk of becoming homeless because of a disability that limits their income. Nearly 34,000 Long Beach residents between 16 and 64 years of age reported to the Census Bureau in 2000 that they had an employment disability,

which is a physical, mental, or emotional condition lasting six months or more that made it difficult to work at a job or business.

The “City of Long Beach 2004 Homeless Assessment” noted that about one-third (32.2%) of the homeless population stated that they had a physical or mental disability. The data from this Assessment also disclosed that nearly 100% of homeless persons with disabilities had an annual income of less than \$10,000.

2. Person on Fixed Incomes (i.e. Social Security Income, retirement pensions, public assistance, etc)

A recent City of Long Beach Homeless Survey found that nearly two-thirds (65.5%) of homeless people surveyed were receiving public assistance. This income amounted to no more than \$10,000 annually.

The link between public assistance and being at risk of becoming homeless is clear. Public Assistance does not provide enough income to allow a single person or a family with no other income to afford housing in today’s market or to obtain housing once they become homeless.

3. Seniors/Elderly

There are 41,654 seniors and elderly residents 65 years of age or older and 21,453 people who are 75 years or older, living in Long Beach *.

Median household income for seniors 65 to 74 years of age was \$33,066 and \$25,700 for seniors 75+ years. Of these households, 44.5% of seniors 65 or older pay 35% or more of their household income for rent.

* 2000 U.S. Census data

4. Youth To Be Emancipated From Foster Care

There are an estimated 1,198 youth (under age 18) in foster care in Long Beach. These youth will be emancipated from foster care after age 18.

Emancipation for youth in foster care means leaving the foster care support system without the support and resources available to youth with substantial family connections.

58% of emancipated youth will exit into the streets.

¹ *AdvoCasey Index*

5. Victims of Domestic Violence

An estimated 30% of households experience domestic violence. This puts these households at risk of becoming homeless because of their domestic violence experiences*.

When a woman leaves an abusive relationship, she often has nowhere to go, no resources and no job skills because the abuser has frequently isolated her from family and friends, and prevented her from getting job training or holding down a job.

Lack of affordable housing and long waiting lists for assisted housing mean that many women and their children are forced to choose between abuse at home or living on the streets;

Shelters are frequently filled to capacity and must turn away battered women and their children.

6. Underemployed and unemployed

a. Unemployed

According to the California Economic Development Department, 7% (16,500) of Long Beach residents were unemployed in February, 2005;

Unemployment benefits last 26 weeks and range from a minimum of \$40 to a maximum of \$450 a week.

A person earning \$25,000 a year is eligible to approximately \$240 in weekly Unemployment benefits.

Benefits of \$240 a week = \$12,480 a year. Benefits of \$450 a week = \$23,400 a year.

b. Under-employed (low wages)

Low wages are defined as an annual household income of \$25,000 - \$30,000 or less, or no more than \$15 an hour. An annual income of \$30,000 or less does not provide enough income for an average one or two-bedroom unit in Long Beach.

Adults and children living on the streets or in homeless facilities on any given night:		
Long Beach	Los Angeles	Nation
5,845	80,000	800,000
Over the course of a year		
Long Beach	Los Angeles	Nation
24,000	254,000	2.5-3.5 million

**DOING NOTHING ABOUT HOMELESSNESS COSTS MORE THAN
PROVIDING SERVICES TO DEAL WITH IT.**



These costs are based on per person, per night of service.

In Summary

Poverty continues to increase among Long Beach residents because salaries remain “flat” and the cost of living continues to increase.

As the gap between income and the cost of housing widens, the risk of becoming homeless or remaining homeless is increasing.

If we continue to do nothing, a certain percent of Long Beach residents who are currently at risk of becoming homeless will, in fact, become homeless.